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ABSTRACT

Adolescents must be viewed as social assets even though there is reason to be concerned about the problems they present to society. Initial discussion relates difficulties adolescents face, problems with adults' perceptions of adolescents, differences in the difficulty of transition to adulthood for youth in different social classes, and the particularly precarious situation of disadvantaged minority youth trying to make the transition. Subsequent discussion focuses on adolescents' lack of civic responsibility. This problem can be addressed by youth services programs and programs involving adolescents in helping relationships with adults who are able to become mentors and role models. Additional recommendations on meeting adolescents' needs focus on the need for employment programs, for restructuring of dysfunctional schools, for flexibility by businesses in hiring high school graduates, and for simplification of voter registration procedures. The responsibility of the health professions and the role of religious institutions in meeting adolescents' needs are sketched. The reorientation of youth organizations to meet the changing needs of adolescents, and to increase the commitment of adults to this age group, is considered. (RH)

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ADOLESCENT ROLELESSNESS IN MODERN SOCIETY

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September 1988

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> The young are in character prone to desire and ready to carry any desire they may have formed into action. Of bodily desires it is the sexual to which they are most disposed to give way, and in regard to sexual desire they exercise no self-restraint. They are changeful too, and fickle in their desires, which are as transitory as they are vehement; for their wishes are keen without being permanent, like a sick man's fits of hunger and thirst.
>
> -- Aristotle[1]

As this quote from Aristotle illustrates, some of our views of adolescents have changed little over the centuries. But research on adolescence has usually been compartmentalized into social and developmental categories. The two need to come together. The word "adolescent" is part of the problem as well. It is defined largely by what it is not--neither child nor adult --legally, in status, role or function. Adolescents have no prepared place in society that is appreciated or approved; nonetheless they must tackle two major tasks, usually on their own: identity formation, and development of self-worth and self-efficacy. The social environment of adolescents today makes both tasks very hard.

For these reasons, adolescents today are said to be suffering from "rolelessness." Of course, they are not truly roleless because society in general, parents, and schools do set certain roles for them, though they are not as meaningful and productive as they could be. Adolescents also have other roles, most often determined by their peers, which are perceived by adults as undesirable. Thus, when we speak of "rolelessness" what we decry is that adolescents do not have contributing,

active, productive roles in concert with adult society. Since current adolescents' roles arose by default, there is much that can be done to restructure their roles in positive ways.

The onset of adolescence is a critical period of biological and psychological change for every child and, for many in our current society, it involves dramatic changes in the social environment as well. For example, the transition from elementary to middle or junior high school or the easy access to potentially life-threatening substances and activities can make adolescence a particularly difficult time. Biological and psychosocial maturity do not progress in synchrony and individual variation is vast. In the past 10 to 20 years, rapid erosion of traditional family and social support networks has added to the difficulties. Despite the biological, social, and technological changes impinging on adolescent development, especially in this century, there appear to be fundamental human needs that are enduring and crucial to healthy development and survival. These fundamental needs include the need to find a place in a valued group that provides a sense of belonging and the need to feel a sense of worth as a person.[2] It is a challenging but not impossible task to find ways to fill these needs. Otherwise, the long period--10-15 years out of a life expectancy of 70-75 years--of biological maturity combined with social dependence and "rolelessness" can only contribute to the familiar litany of disenchantment with learning, drug abuse, early unplanned pregnancy, violence, injury, and other damaging behaviors.

Whom are we talking about?

Adolescents are a diminishing and precious resource. The population of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 in the United States has fluctuated between 18 and 24 million in the past 30 years, and is projected to remain approximately steady through the year 2000. In 1988, it is 21.6 million and 5% are homeless. The ratio of black and hispanic children, age 0-17, to the total youth population was 25% in 1985 and will increase to 30% in 2000. [Figure 1] In the last 100 years, however, both the population and ratio of young people to adults have changed a great deal. [Figure 2] In 1890, youth 14-24 years of age numbered only 1.4 million while the ratio to the population aged 25-64 was 70%. By 1950, the population of young people had increased to 23 million but the ratio to the mature population segment had dropped to 34%. In 1990, the projected ratio will remain approximately steady, at 36%, but the population aged 14-24 will have reached 41.1 million. By comparison, the ratio of persons over 65 to adults 25-64 rose from 16%, in 1950, to 24%, in 1985. Therefore, while the number of adolescents has continued to increase, their proportion of the population as a whole has been cut in half since 1890--a change which took place mostly before 1950--while the proportion of elderly has increased. We should systematically consider how to enlist older and still vigorous people in helping the young.

For at least the last century, adolescence has been viewed

as a distinct stage in human development. Previously, older children were termed "youths" and adolescence "the formative years" (for adult life) and children generally could more easily make the transition from childhood to adulthood. In earlier times, youths were likely to move into adult roles that were familiar--accepting adult tasks and responsibilities progressively as they grew up. The extended family and other adults were mirrors of what the young would become. Responsibilities increased with maturity, but there was little doubt about what was expected.

In the nineteenth century, urban youth, at age 12 or 13, both male and female, often went directly from school to work in order to contribute to the support of the family. Their assistance was needed by the family for survival and often children suffered from having to work under harsh conditions. Rural youth similarly contributed by working side by side with adults on the family farm from an early age. Particularly in the rural areas, children performed the same tasks as their parents, enjoyed the same types of entertainment, and had the same expectations of life.[3] Adolescents were often aware early on that their role within the family and society would be similar to that of their parents, and their parents and other adults provided an abundance of role models. Moreover, the acceptance of adult responsibility occurred at, or even before, the time of the biological changes of puberty.

By 1900, most young people were less often needed to support

the family. Stricter child labor laws were enacted and school years were extended. Now out of the workplace and sequestered in school, youths were separated from adults for most of the day and had fewer adult responsibilities. Opportunities for interaction with adults decreased as did communication between generations.

Over the past two centuries, in large measure because of the control of many infectious diseases and better nutrition and hygiene, children reach puberty at a younger age. In the United States, 150 years ago, the average age of menarche was 16; today it is 12 and might still be dropping. The trend for boys is similar but more difficult to document. At the same time, the social changes described have postponed the end of adolescence--and of dependence--until much later, sometimes until age 25 (for example for those who study for a profession). This phenomenon of a period of 10-15 years of physical maturity along with social dependence--and rolelessness--is relatively new.

Not too surprisingly, a study reported in Being Adolescent[4] (like most other studies, largely involving white working and middle class youth) showed that the adolescents whose activities were followed spent 40% of their time on leisure activities and 27% alone. They averaged 18 hours a week at menial jobs. Thirty-eight hours a week were spent in school. (In contrast, children in Japan spend 59 hours a week in school and have 69 more days in the school year.) They spent only 4.8% of their time with their parents and 2% with adults who were not their parents--for a total of only 7% of waking hours spent with

adults! Half of the study group's waking hours were spent with their peers,. but they clearly lacked meaningful contact with caring adults. They worried most about school, their looks, and being liked--indicators of lack of concern about their role in the family and community, except for school--an important exception to be sure. According to another study [Table 1], the majority of adolescents do not consult or communicate with their parents on topics of importance, such as school, sex, or drugs. It seems that adolescence may have become a "waiting period" of enforced leisure, with fewer responsibilities and less meaningful contact with adults.

The relative isolation of adolescents from adults contributes to the view of adolescence as an alien subculture with no meaningful role in society. According to a 1986 Harris poll, 52% of adults see drug abuse as the most serious problem among youth. Less than half of adults polled believe that young people have a good education or are basically happy, or feel that parents in general do a good job, especially regarding values and discipline, or that the schools are doing a good job. And 75% of adults polled feel that the government is not taking proper responsibility for youth. There seems to be concern that something is wrong, and willingness to look outside the family for help. However, in spite of many adults' negative perceptions of youth, the majority of adolescents in the United States <u>do</u> become productive citizens.

Transition to adult roles

Inconsistency in defining adult responsibility is pervasive. Driving, one of the accepted rites of passage, may begin as early as age 14 or as late as 18, depending on the state. Drinking ages also vary, though most states now set the legal age at 21. In some states, execution is legal for crimes committed prior to age 18. But military service and voting remain set at 18. It is understandable that young people are confused and frustrated by inconsistencies in being allowed to assume adult responsibility for diverse actions of personal significance.

But the difficulties of transition to adulthood vary depending on the conditions in which adolescents find themselves. Relatively affluent youth are generally expected to go to college and their outlook is better, though not trouble free. However, half of American youth do not attend college: this group encounters a variety of problems in making the transition to adulthood that college bound youth do not share. Minority and inner-city youth --in areas of concentrated poverty--encounter the most difficulties and black boys have a higher rate of attrition at every age than any other group.[5]

The transition to adulthood is probably easiest for college-bound youth because the period of adolescence, though lengthened by continued dependency on parents, is structured by years of study, athletics, and other activities--because these parents have the energy and resources to create opportunities for their children. Higher skill levels do make satisfying employment

easier to obtain. College-bound students often consciously postpone other aspects of adulthood, such as marriage and childbearing, until school is completed and they are working and settled. They are future-oriented and not truly "roleless," but the chosen roles may not be in line with adult desires. Too often adolescents--of all groups--have become "takers," rather than "givers" in both family and society.[6] In fact, even many adolescents who do work during high school and college, do so in food-service or sales--not in career-related posts--to have money for personal items or entertainment to the detriment of their studies and other activities.[7] In this way, work may even become dysfunctional to maturity.

Non-college youth have a rockier road. According to a recent report from the W.T. Grant Foundation on non-college youth in America,[8] many of this group's problems stem from the inability to find work at all or at a meaningful level and wage. Even while they are in school, and employment is badly needed, jobs are difficult to find. From 1960 to 1985, the unemployment rate among youths in school, age 16-17, almost doubled. [Table 2] The unemployment rate among blacks is especially high--for black females it is 50.9%.

The problem continues after graduation from high school. In 1986, only 48.9 percent of males and 41.9 percent of females were employed full-time, a decrease from 72.7% and 57%, respectively, in 1968. [Table 3] One important factor in the employment problem is that many corporations will not hire high

school graduates, especially for career track positions, until they are in their mid-twenties. Many employers feel that recent high-school graduates are irresponsible, unqualified, or simply inappropriate for many jobs. This leaves young people floundering and roleless for several years or working at menial and dead-end jobs. The jobs young people can obtain usually pay extremely low wages--too low to allow settling down or supporting a family. In 1985, only 42% of all males earned a real annual income at or above the three-person poverty line. [Table 4] The percentages are lower for black and hispanic young men--24.9% and 35.4% respectively. Thus, more than 3/4 of all black male high school graduates cannot aspire to wages above the poverty line. What, then, is the incentive to finish high school?

William Julius Wilson cites the example of a 29-year-old black man who works as a dishwasher in Chicago. Still living at home, he has never been on welfare and has worked as a dishwasher for three years making $4.85 an hour. Because his employer said he could easily be replaced, he has never called in sick. On the day Wilson's assistants interviewed him, he has just had a molar tooth pulled and was in great pain. Having borrowed money from friends to pay for the extraction, he could not afford any pain-killers. Though he was in extreme pain, he went to work that night to wash dishes.[9]

As Wilson's example illustrates, the situation among truly disadvantaged minority youth is much worse than that of most American youth. These youths have an even greater difficulty

finding jobs. In fact, the adults in their community are likely to be unemployed, working for poverty-level wages, or on welfare. These adolescents "may not know a single adult whose stable employment supports an even modest standard of family life."[10] William Wilson's recent book, The Truly Disadvantaged,[11] depicts how urban centers of concentrated poverty developed. Those who have succeeded in attaining a solid standard of living often have moved away from the city to the suburbs, further depriving young people of role models. Such young people have no experience working or living among people with mid-level or different kinds of jobs and their choices are limited to poorly paying and unrewarding jobs or quick money from drug running. Often the only role models available in areas of concentrated poverty are gang members or drug dealers, who appear to have what adolescents desperately want, respect and money.

In these neighborhoods, often adult women were adolescent mothers themselves. Their daughters, in turn, may see a child of their own as the only hope for affection and respect, and perhaps even stability. However, the babies quickly become demanding toddlers. Usually the fathers of these children do not marry or provide family support. Too early child-bearing can have disastrous consequences for both mother and child, including dropping out of school and long-term unemployment for the mother and low-birth weight and other health problems for the child.

Although the situation of disadvantaged youth is particularly precarious, among youth of any background or in any

circumstance, frustration over the inability to get a job, to take control of one's own life, to be awarded adult responsibilities, to be valued and needed, can contribute to drug and alcohol abuse, unnecessary risk-taking, and violence directed at one's self or others.

Those adolescents who are already disconnected from family, school, work, community, or plans for the future may look for support elsewhere. What adults may term "deviant" behavior may be one way for adolescents to increase self-esteem and obtain some sense of dignity. For example, a gang member described that he became involved in a robbery because, "I resented that my father was not involved. Now I don't care but I wouldn't have gotten involved in a gang if he had a job and if he had a relationship with me. The only adult male in my life is an uncle who retired from working for the city."[12]

A serious though not life threatening type of "rolelessness" among all youth is the lack of civic responsibility. Sixty percent of 18-24 year olds did not vote in the presidential election of 1984,[13] apparently feeling that they have no stake in the future of their country or that voting is not the avenue to express their stake. This civic apathy may be an expression of perceived rolelessness among older adolescents--that what they do makes no difference to anyone.

What can we do?

A 1942 study of young men who served in the Civilian

Conservation Corps (CCC) showed that their main reason for joining was to help their families. [Table 5] However, over 70% joined either primarily or to some extent because they were tired of having nothing to do--when given the opportunity to be of use, many welcome it.

In the 1980's, several different plans for involving adolescents in youth service have been proposed ranging from national mandatory service to optional service programs for credit in schools. Whatever the plan, the goals are essentially similar--to give youth a sense of self-worth and accomplishment, to bring them in contact with adults who may serve as mentors and role models (increasing the current 2% or so of time in contact with unrelated adults), to provide service to those in need, and to learn responsibility and behaviors appropriate to holding a job and performing well. Promoters of national mandatory service also see it as a sort of rite of passage marking and perhaps easing the transition to adulthood. Some feel that adolescents' "insulation from the real business of life produces 'the more subtle, subjective states such as apathy, self-hatred, boredom, acute feelings of frustration, loneliness, and meaninglessness,'"[14] and that youth service can be used to combat these feelings. Others feel that youth service can promote a commitment to others and thus shape the values of society in the future. By relieving the frustration of youth and providing them with constructive values, youth service can help to combat the risky behaviors that often result from restlessness and

rolelessness. Other suggestions include monitored work experience, school volunteer service as part of classwork, graduation requirements, or extracurricular activities, and job corps and other options for out-of-school and out-of-job youth.[15] Voter registration drives with adolescent participation or political activities through organizations such as the League of Women Voters or the Youth Policy Institute may serve to increase civic responsibility.

Another promising possibility is linking adolescents with retired persons. For example, in the Partners Program developed by Joan Schine (bringing adolescents and the elderly together),[16] young adolescents develop new and meaningful relationships with adults outside their immediate family or school. The elderly, in turn, are able to reach out to a new and very different population, at a time when their own circle of friends or contacts may be shrinking. Interviews with middle school students who regularly visited a nursing home revealed that the students aimed to make friends with the elders whom they viewed as bored and lonely. The children worked hard to be liked by their elderly companions. Simple events such as giving the partner a snack or going with him to his room helped to individualize relationships. The students interviewed believed that friendship is healing, that it makes both the elder person and the youth feel good about himself.

It seems clear that all youth need to develop strong one-on-one relationships with adults in their communities, schools, and

work environments.[17] For inner-city and minority youth, who are at greatest need and greatest risk, youth service programs may be more difficult but are even more important because they provide an opportunity to succeed outside of school tasks. Although many scattered programs exist, a more intense and systematic commitment is required to provide each young person with at least one human anchor.[18] A key to the success of service programs is "examined experience"--the service opportunity is "examined" with the mentor, and the young person learns from reviewing the experience and trying again. Programs that link school and community also serve the purpose of giving the school experience more meaning.

Beyond community service, there is also a need to help non-college bound youth to secure stable employment at an earlier age. This may be done through school programs, on-the-job training programs, or programs that aid the job search and teach how to work. An example is the Boston Compact, a formal agreement between the Boston School Department, members of the Boston businees community, area colleges and universities, and the Boston trade unions. Its purpose is to improve the education, work preparation, employment opportunities, and college attendance prospects of students in Boston's public high schools. It has been hailed as a highly promising program to bring together different sectors of the community to assist youth, but evaluation is not yet complete.

For many young people, schools, as they are structured, have

proved dysfunctional and do not provide the necessary preparation for the responsibilities that lie beyond graduation. Schools need to be restructured and their curricula improved and made more meaningful by incorporating health education, human biology, community service, marketable technical skills, and career information. The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents is addressing many of these issues, as Dr. David Hamburg will discuss later.

Businesses should be more flexible about hiring high-school graduates. More businesses could develop responsible positions and job training programs for young people, offer reasonable salaries, and allow opportunities for advancement, rather than a job with no opportunities and at minimum wage. From a business view, this is an investment in the quality of the work force.

Procedures for registering to vote need to be simplified and young people recruited to vote, for example by programs to contact youths on their 18th birthdays to register or election-day registration. This is one aspect of civic responsibility that can mold a sense of personal worth and stimulate social participation.

The health professions--including but not limited to physicians--have a particular responsibility to be sensitive to early signs of trouble in their adolescent patients and to follow through on appropriate referrals. The participation of health professionals in school-linked clinics can have positive effects, especially regarding mental health and reproductive services. A

study of the first two school-linked clinics in high schools in St. Paul, Minnesota, showed that childbearing among participating female students decreased by more that 50% within three years.[19]

The role of religious institutions in increasing the life chances of adolescents is also important but often given too little attention. In some communities, 50% of adolescents attend church regularly and church attendance correlates with a lower frequency of high risk behaviors.[20] Religious institutions, of course, have traditionally provided support for youth, but their role can and should be adapted to current circumstances--e.g. in reaching out to rootless youth. The Black churches in particular are strong forces to help youth in their communities.

Youth organizations--such as the Scouts, 4-H Clubs, Camp Fire Girls--sprang up in the first half of the 20th century to stress skills, good habits, and service to others. They were organized to take advantage of the new leisure time of youths who were not working. But now they need to adjust to the changing needs of adolescents, and to increase the commitment of adults. They have the capacity to make dependable connections with many lonely and isolated young people.

Conclusion

Although there is reason to be concerned about the problems of youth, adolescents must be claimed as assets to society, as the Grant Commission report recommends. We must change the view that many people hold of all youth as troubled and harmful to the

rest of society. Many indicators of trends regarding drugs, pregnancy, and school dropouts show that in general we are slowly heading in the right direction though much more needs to be done. We particularly need a social commitment to providing opportunities for meaningful roles for young people who will not have many years of formal education.

Self-esteem from secure loving relationships and success at tasks is important to the development of any individual. Fortunately, the process continues throughout life. The span of years of adolescence is long and offers opportunities for not one but many turning points in looking towards potentially productive later years. How can we redefine roles and tasks for adolescents, particularly those at high risk, to, as David Hamburg says, "redirect the trajectory to a more adaptive path?"

This redirection--or creation of constructive, rewarding roles for all adolescents, including those at high risk--can include: universal prenatal care with simultaneous enriched educational opportunities for pregnant girls; providing alternatives to premature assuming of adult roles with regard to sexual activity, buying power, etc., before appropriate maturational steps have taken place; drawing on the commitment of older people and the innovative ideas of youth--linking of generations, communities, and youth in mentored service; linking of schools to communities so schools become a more desirable and helpful part of all adolescent experience; capitalizing on the peak of empathy and affinity for humanitarian causes displayed by

youth (for example, in the past few years 600 groups of Amnesty International have been formed in high schools); providing social supports, which, with opportunities to enhance self-efficacy, provide buffers for coping in times of stress; and encouraging multi-disciplinary research on adolescents of different cultures, ethnic background, socioeconomic status, geographic areas, and gender, since different groups have different vulnerabilities and we cannot generalize from research data on middle class white youth. For all groups except white middle class youth, so far, we have barely begun to count the casualties; we do not yet understand how they happen or how to prevent them. Rolelessness <u>is</u> a problem, but there is much that we can do to add purpose to the years of enforced leisure.

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development was established to deal with these issues, as was the Adolescent Health Initiative of the American Medical Association. At present, the Carnegie Council's focus is on: educating young adolescents, identifying new frontiers of research on adolescence, assessing promising preventive interventions, and exploring the constructive potential of the media. The Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents has been formed to engage in a wide-ranging examination of current educational experiences of young adolescents. The potential of school-linked programs that provide health services and health promotion are also being considered, as well as the linkage of schools to community institutions, particularly through youth service. The

Task Force, chaired by Council member David Hornbeck, expects to issue its report in Spring 1988. Carnegie also is supporting the preparation by Stanford University of an interdisciplinary volume that will sythesize existing knowledge about adolescent development. Key research gaps and opportunities are being identified. The Council is assessing current knowledge about generic approaches to preventive interventions for problem behaviors in adolescence. It is also investigating the potential of the media to engage public concern and to influence understanding about the adolescent years. The American Medical Association's work in vertical networking, convening, and recruiting the medical community to the task of dimishing adolescent rolelessness are reinforcing efforts to raise the needs of youth higher on the national agenda.

There are at least two major reasons for these efforts: making adolescents' experience <u>as adolescents</u> as rewarding and productive as possible is the right and humane thing to do; and we all depend on them for our future.

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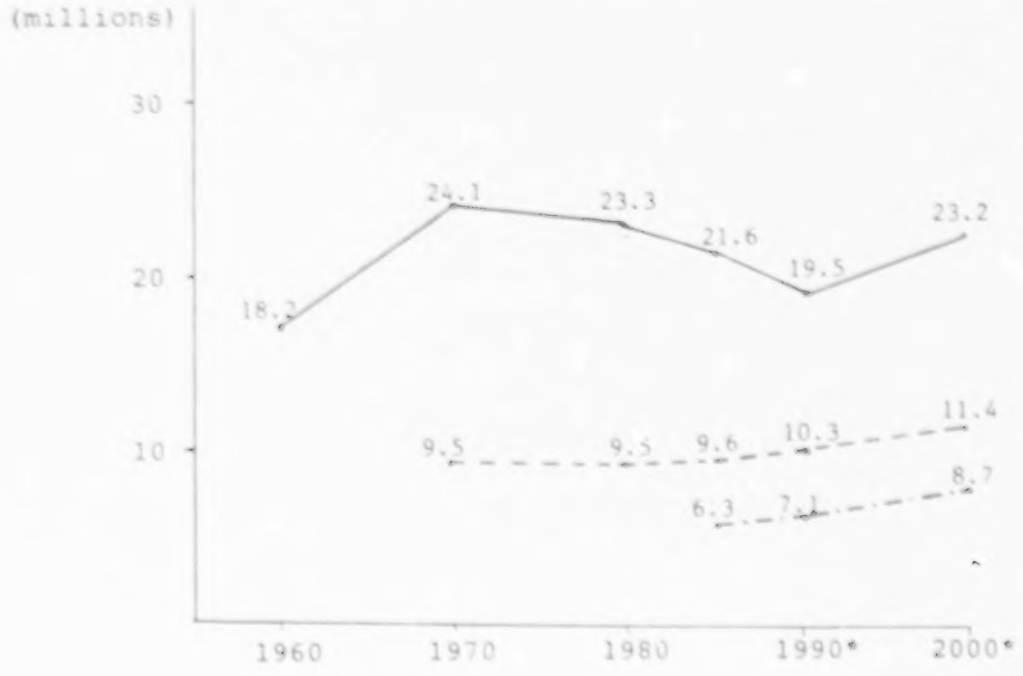
Figure 1

Population



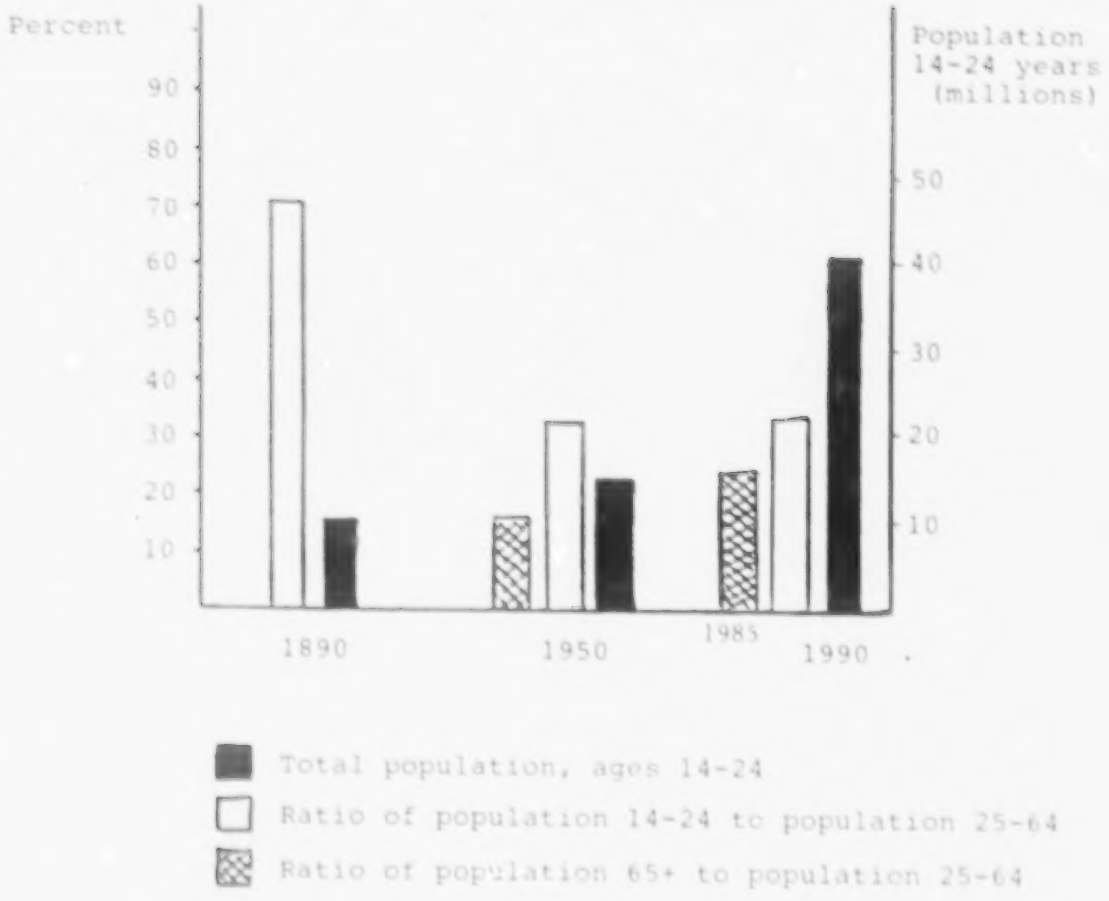
— population 12-17 years, total

-- population age 0-17, black

-.- population age 0-17, Spanish origin

Source: "Preliminary Estimates of the Population of the United States by Age, Sex and Race: 1970 to 1981," Current Population Reports, Series P25, No. 917, Table 1; "Estimates of the Population of the United States by Age, Sex and Race: 1980 to 1985," Current Population Reports, Series P25, No. 985, Table 1; "Projections of the Population of the United States: 1983 to 2080," Current Population Reports, Series P25, No. 952, Table 6 (middle series); 1970 Census volume, "Characteristics of the Population, U.S. Summary," Table 52; 1960 Census volume, "Characteristics of the Population, U.S. Summary," Table 155; and "Projections of the Hispanic Population: 1983 to 2080," P-25, No. 995, Table 2 (middle series).

Figure 2



Adapted from: Health United States 1987, Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988, & Glen H. Elder, "Adolescence in Historical Perspective," in J. Adelson, Handbook of Adolescent Psychology, New York: Wiley & Sons, 1980.

Table 1

Problems about which Adolescents
Ask Their Parents' Advice

JOB	45%
COLLEGE	39%
SCHOOL PROBLEMS	39%
SIBLING PROBLEMS	29%
HEALTH/DIET	23%
DRINKING	20%
SEX	17%
TROUBLE WITH OTHER ADOLESCENTS	16%
DRUGS	16%

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Table 2

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE *

	1960	1970	1980	1985
All ethnic groups				
Males	11.0	16.5	19.8	20.8
Females	9.5	15.9	16.9	19.0
White				
Males	--	15.1	17.4	18.7
Females	--	14.8	15.3	15.7
Black				
Males	--	33.3	42.9	41.3
Females	--	28.4	39.4	50.9
Spanish origin	--	--	--	--

* 16-17 year olds, enrolled in school
-- no data available

Handbook of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 2217, Bureau of Labor Statistics, June, 1985; and unpublished data for 1985 from the U.S. Dept of Labor.

Table 3

Employment to Population Ratios and Full-Time Employment to Population Ratios of High School Graduates Not Enrolled in College, 1968-1986

	Males		Females	
	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
Year	Employment to Population Ratio	Full-Time Employment to Population Ratio	Employment to Population Ratio	Full-Time Employment to Population Ratio
March 1968	86.5	72.7	68.9	57.0
March 1974	85.6	69.6	69.1	47.6
March 1986	75.2	48.9	71.9	41.9

The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America. The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship. January 1988.

Table 4

Percent of 20-24 Year-Old Males (All Educational Groups), With Real Annual Earnings At or Above the Three-Person Poverty Line, by Race/Ethnic Group: 1973-1985
(in percent)

	1973	1979	1985
All Males	59.4%	57.5%	43.7%
White, non-Hispanic	60.4%	60.4%	48.5%
Black, non-Hispanic	55.2%	41.2%	24.9%
Hispanic	61.1%	54.1%	35.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, CPS Public Use Tapes, March 1974, March 1980, and March 1986; tabulations by Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University.

Table 5

Reasons given by interviewed enrollees for enrolling in the CCC

Type of motivation	Percentage of boys who gave the specific reason	
	As the chief reason	Among all reasons
Boy desired to help family	62.4	77.5
Boy was tired of having nothing to do	18.5	52.5
Boy wanted to get away from home	3.1	15.0
Family wanted boy to go	2.2	15.0
Relief agency wanted boy to go	2.0	8.3
Boy's friends were going	1.7	20.1
Other reasons	10.1	15.2
Number of boys	356	374

Kenneth Holland & Frank Ernest Hill, Youth in the CCC, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1942.